

Raspailia (?) *rigida*, Ridley and Dendy (Pl. XXXIX. fig. 3).

1886. *Raspailia* (?) *rigida*, Ridley and Dendy, Ann. and Mag. Nat. Hist., ser. 5, vol. xviii. p. 483.

Sponge (Pl. XXXIX. fig. 3) commencing as a slender stem only 2·5 mm. in diameter and gradually expanding upwards, without any sudden break, to a diameter of a little over 4 mm.; approximately straight; giving off one short, stout, abnormal-looking branch. Height of specimen 121 mm. *Colour* in spirit yellowish-grey. *Texture* firm, tough; the sponge is subrigid, not very elastic nor flexible; the difference in this respect between *Raspailia flagelliformis*, nobis, and the present species being due to the absence in the latter of a stout, dense, horny axis. *Surface* very distinctly hispid.

Skeleton.—There is a dense central axis of closely packed, stout, tylostylote or subtylostylote spicules, arranged longitudinally and parallel with one another, and with their apices directed upwards. From this axis radiate towards the surface rather sparse bands composed of similar spicules, terminating in great divergent brushes, which are again composed of the same kind of spicule (and also of some of larger size) with little more than their bases embedded in the soft tissues and projecting for a long way beyond the surface. There appears to be little or no horny matter present in any part of the skeleton.

Spicules.—*Megasclera*; of one kind only, viz., large, straight, smooth tylostyli or subtylostyli, very finely and gradually pointed and usually with distinct, subglobular heads; size variable, up to about 2·0 by 0·025 mm.; usually smaller, especially in the dermal brushes, whose component spicules commonly measure up to about 1·0 mm. in length.

The spicules of this species are extremely large for the genus to which it is referred. The peculiarities of its external characters have been already noticed. It is doubtful whether it is a *Raspailia* at all, or even an Axinellid; it presents strong resemblances to the genus *Suberites*.

Locality.—Station 142, December 18, 1873; lat. 35° 4' S., long. 18° 37' E.; Agulhas Bank, Cape of Good Hope; depth, 150 fathoms; bottom, green sand; bottom temperature, 47°·0. One specimen.

Genus *Dendropsis*,¹ Ridley and Dendy (Pls. XXXVIII., XL., XLVI.).

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Sponge erect, ramose. Skeleton arrangement *Raspailia*-like; megasclera stylote (one form of which may be characterised by the presence of two sharp spikes projecting from the base). Microsclera present in the form of minute spined oxea.

We have only a single species of this remarkable genus, but the characters are such as to separate it widely from all existing genera. Notwithstanding the presence of the minute spined oxea we are disposed to place the genus amongst the Axinellidæ, for the

¹ So called because of the resemblance which the type species bears to a small tree.